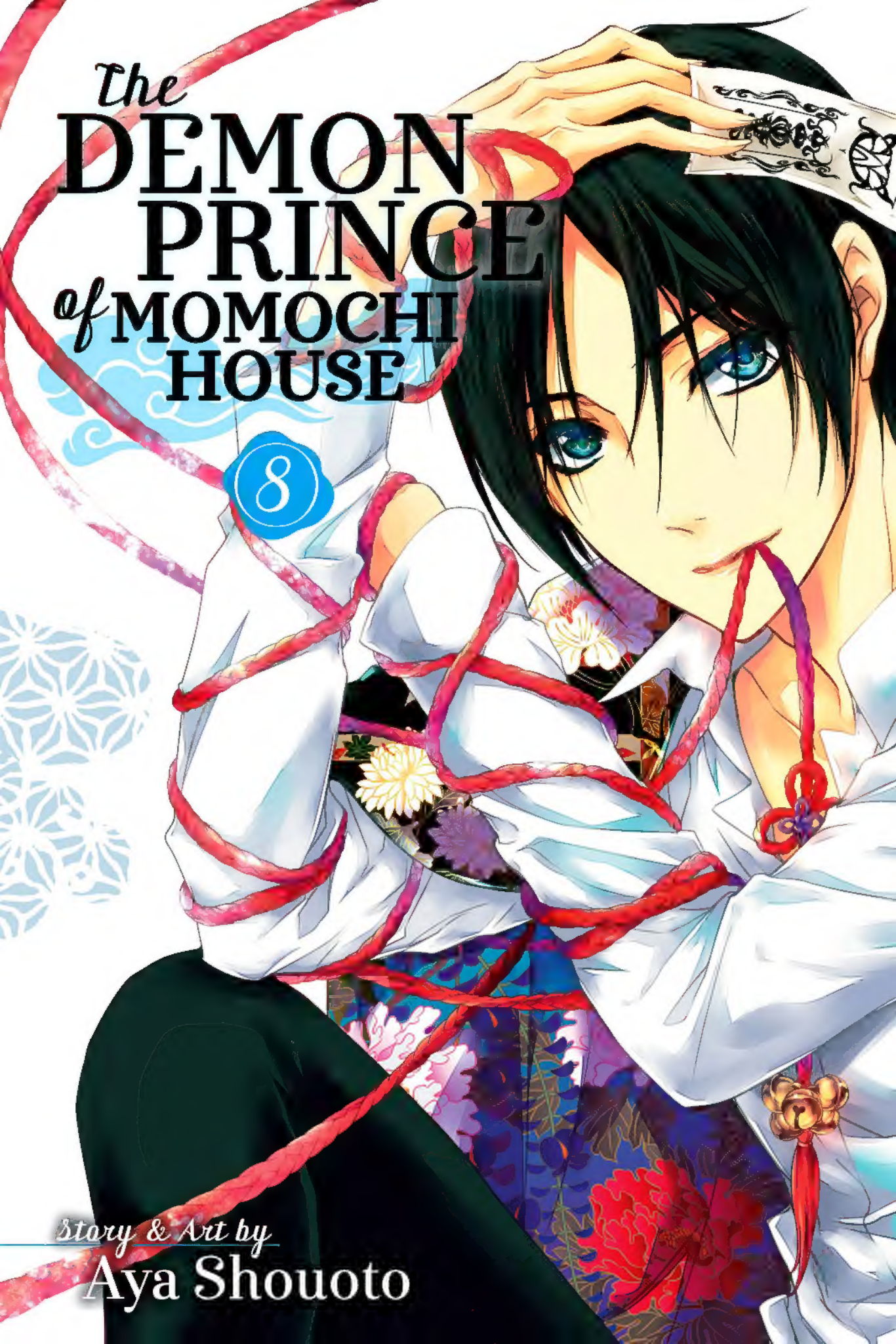

The
DEMON
PRINCE
of MOMOCHI
HOUSE
8
Story & Art by
Aya Shouoto

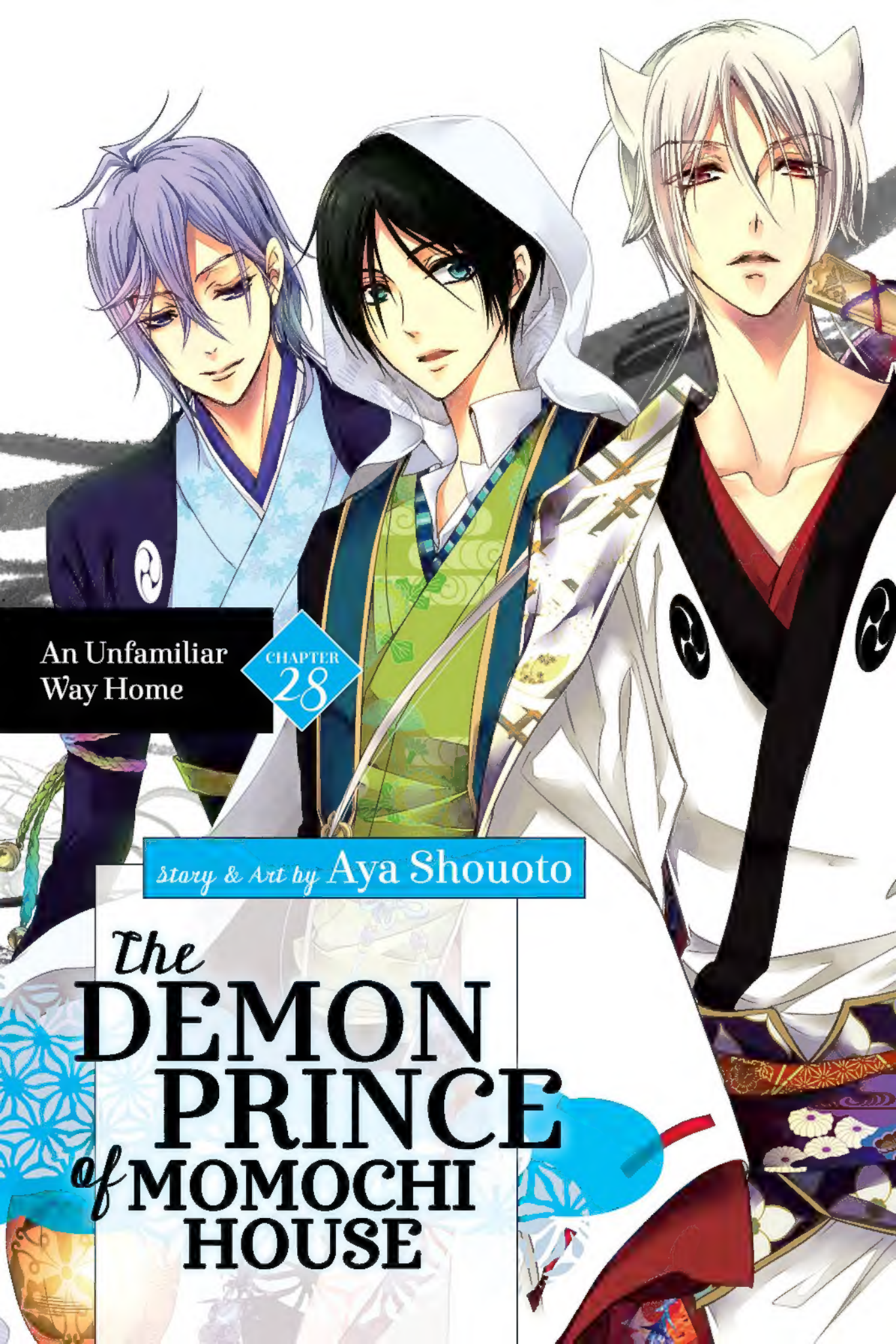
"YOU MUSTN'T LOOK AT ME."

CHAPTER 28

An Unfamiliar Way Home

Story & Art by Aya Shouoto

The DEMON PRINCE of MOMOCHI HOUSE



An Unfamiliar Way Home

CHAPTER 28

Story & Art by Aya Shouoto

The DEMON PRINCE of MOMOCHI HOUSE

The DEMON PRINCE of MOMOCHI HOUSE

8

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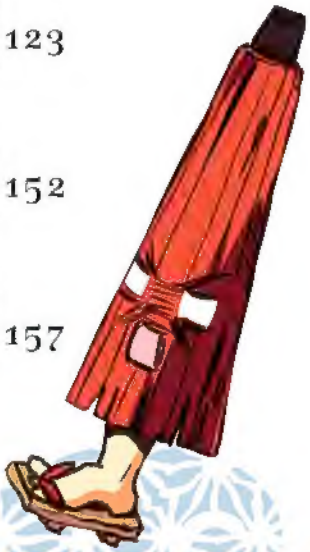


The Mysterious Residents of Momochi House

Aoi Nanamori

When he was 7 years old, he wandered into Momochi House and was chosen as the Omamori-sama. He transforms into a nue to perform his duties, but it seems this role was meant for Himari.

Omamori-sama (Nue)

An ayakashi, or demon, with the ears of a cat, the wings of a bird, and the tail of a fox. As the Omamori-sama, the nue protects Momochi House and eliminates demons who make their way in from the spiritual realm.

Yukari

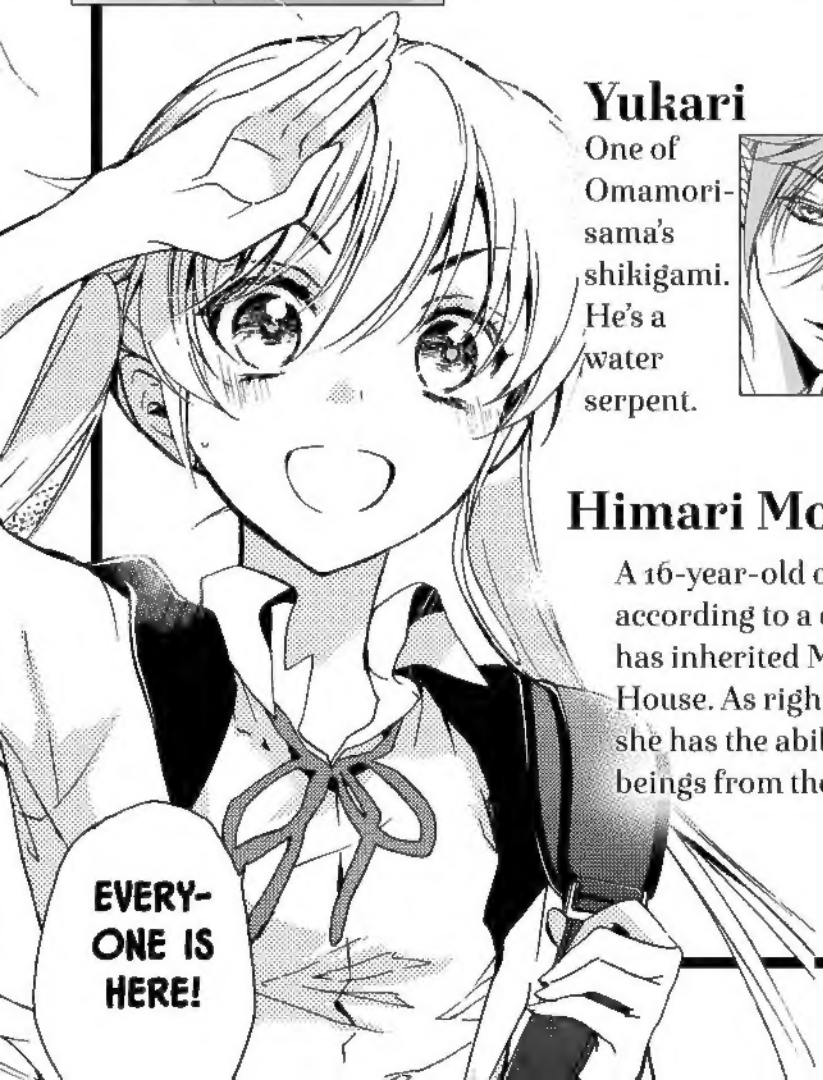
One of Omamori-sama's shikigami. He's a water serpent.

Ise

One of Omamori-sama's shikigami. He's an orangutan.

Himari Momochi

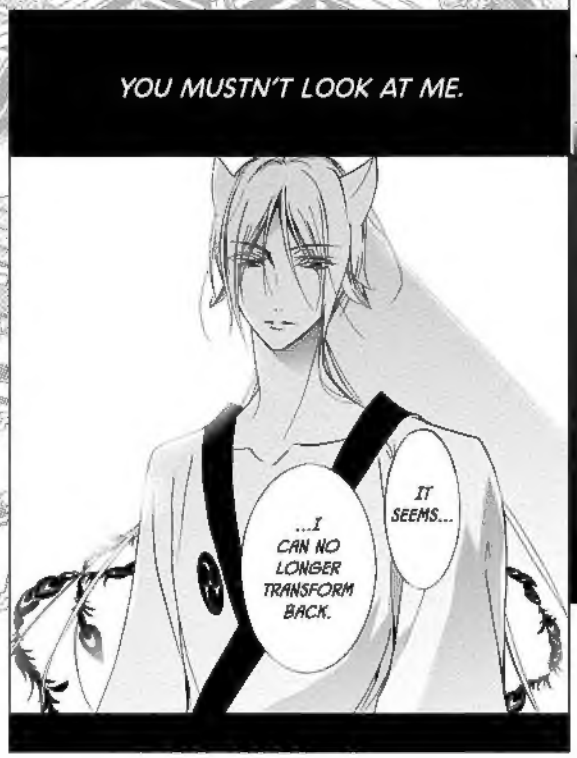
A 16-year-old orphan who, according to a certain will, has inherited Momochi House. As rightful owner, she has the ability to expel beings from the house.



Lesser Yokai

Momochi House: Story Thus Far

Aoi has fallen into a slump. In order to find a way to help him, Himari starts looking into Aoi's family. She finds the Nanamori family home on an ancient map of Mr. Nachi's. The location is an empty lot, but Himari sees a ghost there. The next day, at Senoo's suggestion, Himari investigates the ghost of Kagome Park as part of a summer research project. On the way home, a ghostly entity attaches itself to Senoo and makes its way into Momochi House. Nachi is revealed to be the one controlling Senoo. In the past, Nachi also tricked the young Aoi into entering Momochi House in order to turn him into a shikigami. Nachi uses a kotodama technique to control Aoi and his shikigami, but just in the nick of time, Aoi transforms into the Nue and defeats Nachi. But the relief is short-lived: Aoi can no longer return to his human form!



TOK
DID I MAKE TOO MUCH BREAKFAST FOR YOU?
YUKARI...
HE'S NOT SICK IN BED, RIGHT?
NO, BUT...
AFTER AOI TOLD ME HE COULDN'T TRANSFORM BACK...
...I HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO TALK TO HIM, AND WE'VE BEEN KEPT SEPARATED.
IT'S ALREADY BEEN THREE DAYS. AM I STILL NOT ALLOWED TO SEE AOI—I MEAN, NUE?

HIMARI...

ZUSHI, TAIKOMOCHI ...
ME THREE.
I'D LIKE TO SEE AOI TOO...
PWOP

I'M WORRIED. I WANT TO SEE HIM EVEN IF IT'S JUST FOR A LITTLE WHILE.

ALL RIGHT...
...

I'LL ASK NUE IF IT'S OKAY.

WE'D LIKE TO APOLOGIZE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.
IT WAS IMPROPER OF US TO BE CONTROLLED BY ONE OF HIS ENEMIES.
FIDGET
FIDGET

KLAK
NUE...
HIMARI WISHES TO SEE YOU.
...
I'M HIS SHIKI-GAMI!
WHAT ARE YOU GUYS DOING IN THIS ROOM?
I WAS WONDERING WHERE YOU WERE.
RIGHT BACK AT YOU!
THIS IS ANOTHER PART OF THE HOUSE I DON'T KNOW...
THIS WAY.
KLAK
YOU RABBLE AREN'T ALLOWED IN YET.
WHOA.
!
GRAB
THERE YOU GO, HIMARI.
YOU MAY ENTER.
HUH? WHY?
I DON'T MIND IF IT'S FOR A MOMENT.
PHOO

JOLT
FOOM
THANKS FOR COMING.

AS YOU CAN SEE, I'M PERFECTLY COMFORT-ABLE.
WAS THAT ODD SENSATION JUST MY IMAGINA-TION?
SHMP
...
THANK GOOD-NESS... YOU SEEM WELL.
NUE IS HIS USUAL SELF.
WHY A BARRIER?
THEY'RE A PRECAUTION-ARY BARRIER... SOMETHING TO PUT MY MIND AT EASE.
WHAT ARE THE SHIMENAWA FOR?
YOU MEAN WHAT IS IT FOR?
BARRIERS ARE ALWAYS MEANT TO SEAL IN BAD THINGS.
TELL ME...
...WHAT'S HAPPENING TO AOI?

...
FROM WHAT I GATHER...
AOI'S PAST—HIS MEMORIES OF HIS FAMILY—HAD BEEN SEALED AWAY BY TAKAMURA NACHI'S SPELL.
NOW THAT SPELL IS BROKEN, THOSE MEMORIES WERE SUPPOSED TO GRADUALLY RETURN.
BUT ONCE HE BECAME AWARE THAT THEY WERE MISSING...
...HIS AYAKASHI CONSCIOUS-NESS FILLED THAT VOID INSTEAD.
THE GAP IN HIS MEMORIES...
...YOU'RE STUCK AS THE NUE.
THAT'S WHY...

I'M SURE YOU'VE HEARD STORIES...
...OF PEOPLE WANDERING INTO AYAKASHI PARTIES...
...ONLY TO DISCOVER THEY'VE BECOME AYAKASHI TOO.
WE ENTER PEOPLE'S MINDS...
...TO TAKE THEM TO OUR SIDE...
SHUDDER
YOU MUSTN'T LOOK AT ME...
THE MEANING OF THOSE WORDS...
SO...

KLAK
YUKARI.
YES.
HIMARI, IT'S TIME.
I DON'T WANT...
THIS IS SO SUDDEN...
HIMARI.
BUT...
IN THAT CASE-
...I DON'T THINK YOU SHOULD COME HERE TO SEE ME THAT OFTEN.
...BECAUSE THIS HAS HAPPENED...
IF YOUR PAST MEMORIES ARE RETURNED TO YOU...
...YOU'LL BE ABLE TO TRANSFORM BACK?
THAT BOY...

IT MIGHT BE...
...
...PAINFUL FOR AOI...
I DON'T WANT HIM...
BUT...
...TO END UP...
...LEAVING ME.
AOI IS LOST.
PLEASE ...
LET ME SEARCH FOR YOUR PAST.

VERY WELL.
BUT DON'T DO ANYTHING RASH.
KLAK
SHE
!
THANK YOU!
HIMARI, IT'S TIME TO GO.
IT'LL BE ALL RIGHT.
AOI...
...WILL BECOME HIMSELF AGAIN.
I'LL FIND HIS PAST...

KLAK
SHE NEVER EVEN ASKED WHETHER YOU WANT TO TURN BACK. HOW CONVENIENT SHE'S SO SIMPLE-MINDED.
DON'T YOU AGREE, NUE?
KASHA, DON'T COME THROUGH THE REAR SCREEN...
...WITH-OUT PERMIS-SION.
YOU REMAINING IN THAT FORM HAS FILLED MOMOCHI HOUSE WITH AYAKASHI ENERGY.
...AND THAT IS CONVENIENT FOR ME.

I'M PRETTY SURE YOU DON'T REALLY CARE ABOUT YOUR PAST...
...ANY-MORE.
HOW DOES IT FEEL?
YOU STILL SEEM UNEASY AND UNAC-CUSTOMED TO YOUR FORM.
HEH
HEH
...
YOU'RE ENJOYING THIS, KASHA.
UNFORTUNATELY, I'M NOT STUPID ENOUGH...
...TO TREAT YOU LIKE A FRIEND AND TELL YOU MY TRUE FEELINGS.
...
OH?

DOES THAT MEAN YOU INTEND TO RESIST?
...
THIS IS NONE OF YOUR CONCERN.
FASCI-NATING.
I WOULDN'T HAVE IT ANY OTHER WAY.
I ENJOY WATCHING YOU STRUGGLE.
NOW THEN, WHAT SHALL I DO THIS TIME?
...
I JUST TOLD HIM IT'S NONE OF HIS CON-CERN...
...
DON'T LAY A HAND ON HIMARI.

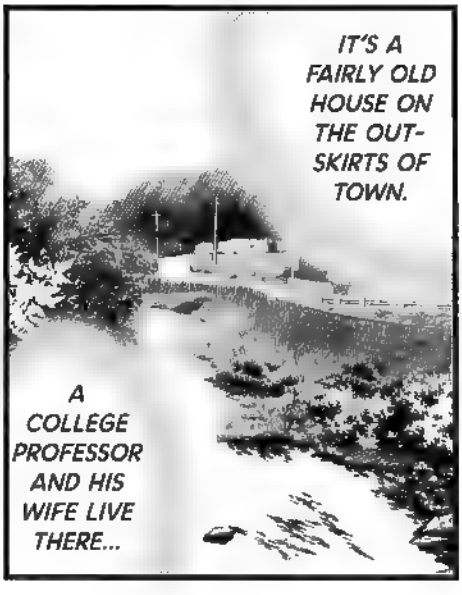
I NEED TO DISCOVER AOI'S PAST...
HMM...
...BUT HIS HOUSE WASN'T ON THE OLD MAP.
WHERE CAN I FIND CLUES?
HIMARI ...
YESTERDAY I WENT TO A TOWN ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE MOUNTAINS TO GIVE OUT CANDY FOR THE CHILDREN'S ASSOCIATION.
AND I FOUND IT...
WHAT ?
THE NANAMORI HOUSE.
!

I RAN OUT OF CANDY AND WASN'T ABLE TO DELIVER ANY TO THE NANAMORI HOUSE.
TOK
I THOUGHT I WOULD ASK FOR YOUR HELP.
RUI...
WHAT A COINCI-DENCE!
I WONDER... BUT THAT HOUSE IS IN A NEIGHBORING TOWN.
ANYWAY...
YOU'RE LOOKING FOR THE NANAMORI FAMILY, RIGHT?
WHY DON'T YOU TAKE THIS AS A WAY TO MEET THEM?
THANKS, RUI!
HOW-EVER...
SHFF
...THERE IS SOMETHING ELSE.
TOK

ACCORDING TO THE PEOPLE IN TOWN..
...THE NANAMORI FAMILY...
...LOST A CHILD.
VROOO
VEEN

THEY DO LIVE FAR FROM TOWN.
NOT AS FAR AS MOMOCHI HOUSE, THOUGH.
BUT...
KRIII
KRIII

...WITH THEIR DAUGHTER WHO'S IN SECOND GRADE.
KRIII
KRIII


IT'S A FAIRLY OLD HOUSE ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF TOWN.
A COLLEGE PROFESSOR AND HIS WIFE LIVE THERE...

I WANT YOU TO TAKE TWO BAGS JUST IN CASE.
SOME PEOPLE SAID THEY HAD LOST A CHILD...
...AND OTHERS SAY THEY'VE SEEN THEIR DAUGHTER PLAYING WITH SIBLINGS.
DO THEY REMEMBER AOI AS THEIR CHILD WHO DIED?
OR...
...PERHAPS AOI REALLY IS DEAD.
HYOOO
SWIP SWIP
THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE.
SWIP
SHOOO
WHAT IS THIS FEELING?
IS SOMEONE THERE?
?!

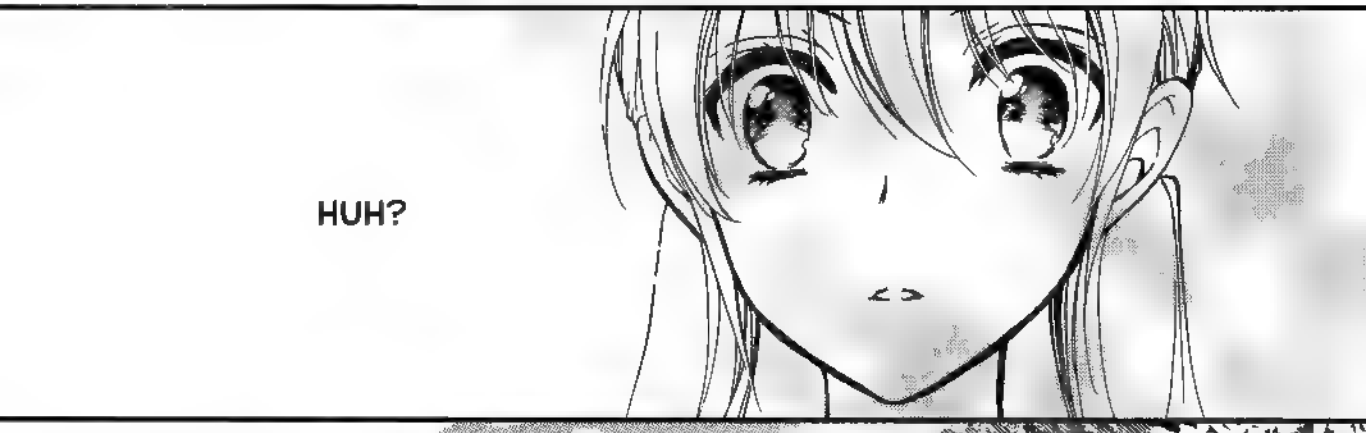
SHU
YO.
MP
WHA-?!
A WILD THUG APPEARED ?!
ISE?!
SHIK
W-WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
I'M HERE TO KEEP AN EYE ON YOU!

NUE TOLD ME TO WATCH YOU...
...SO THAT YOU WOULDN'T DO ANYTHING RIDICULOUS.
I had no choice.
ANYTHING RIDICULOUS?
I'M JUST GOING TO A NEIGHBORING TOWN. I DON'T NEED ANYONE TO KEEP AN EYE ON ME.
AND WHY ARE YOU DRESSED LIKE THAT?
WHAT?!
I'M DRESSED LIKE A HUMAN SO PEOPLE WON'T THINK I'M SUSPICIOUS.
I'M GOING TO SEE A CHILD.
YOU LOOK TOTALLY SUSPICIOUS!
WHICH PART?!
HOW?!
ANYWAY...
I'M NOT IN ANY...
VOOSH

KRIII
KRIII
SPLASH!
...DANGER.
I'M SO VERY SORRY.
NO, I WASN'T PAYING ATTEN-TION...
...SO WHEN I WATER THE YARD, I SPRAY EVERYWHERE... I SHOULD BE MORE CAREFUL.
NOT MANY PEOPLE PASS THROUGH HERE...
NO NEED TO THANK ME. YOUR CLOTHES SHOULD DRY QUICKLY IN THIS HEAT. IT WILL BE ONLY A SHORT WHILE.
THANKS FOR LENDING ME SOME CLOTHES.
SHE SEEMS LIKE A KIND MOTHER.

I'LL BRING MORE TEA AND SNACKS.
ISE, YOU'RE EATING TOO MUCH!
HMPH
WE'RE NOT GOING TO STAY VERY LONG.
KRIII
KRIII
KRIII
I'm glad the contents didn't get wet.
OH, THE BAGS OF CANDY HAVE DRIED.
THIS MIGHT BE THE WRONG FAMILY.
BUT SHE DOESN'T RESEMBLE AOI.
I'M GLAD SOMEONE FROM THE CHILDREN'S ASSOCIATION CAME BY.
THANK YOU FOR COMING ALL THE WAY HERE. AKANE IS STILL AT SCHOOL, SO I'LL MAKE SURE SHE GETS THIS.
OH...
SO JUST ONE BAG THEN, RIGHT?
OH

WILL YOU BE ALL RIGHT? YOUR CLOTHES ARE STILL DAMP.
I'LL BE FINE. MY BUS HOME IS COMING SOON.
I SEE.
YES, JUST ONE.
THANKS FOR THE TEA.
THANK YOU FOR YOUR HARD WORK.
I'M HOME!
TMP
A VISITOR?
AKANE.
OH...


HUH?

JUST NOW...
FOR A MOMENT...
SOMEONE FROM THE CHILDREN'S ASSOCIATION BROUGHT YOU SOME CANDY.
CANDY!
HELLO, AKANE.

YOU'RE WELCOME!
THANK YOU FOR THE CANDY!
...SHE LOOKED LIKE THE NUE...
...RATHER THAN AOI?
WELL, I'M OFF. BYE-BYE!
WHY DID I THINK...
AKANE, YOU SHOULDN'T WALK HOME BY YOURSELF.
BUT... I WASN'T BY MYSELF.
WHAT'S THIS?
TM

I'M DELIVERING CANDY ON BEHALF OF THE CHILDREN'S ASSOCIA-TION...
OH...
THANK YOU FOR THAT.
DO WE HAVE A VISITOR?
OH!
DAD!
I PICKED UP AKANE ALONG THE WAY.
YOU'RE HOME EARLY, DARLING.

WHAT IS IT?
AOI...
...REALLY LOOKS LIKE...
...HIS FATHER.

THAT WAS AOI'S FAMILY.
WINNE
SHFF
MOM, I WON SOME GUM!
OH, HOW WON-DERFUL!
SMILE

TMP
TMP
OH! THERE SHE IS!
DASH
I'M GOING TO TELL THAT GIRL!
HUH?
DON'T GO TOO FAR.
YOU THINK THAT WAS AOI'S FAMILY?
I'M NOT SO SURE.
JOLT
BUT YOU SAW IT TOO, RIGHT?
THE FATHER LOOKS EXACTLY LIKE AOI.
THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEAN.

THAT'S NOT REALLY AOI'S...
DASH
MMBL
...
WHAT DO I DO NOW?
...
MMBL
...
MMBL
...
MMBL

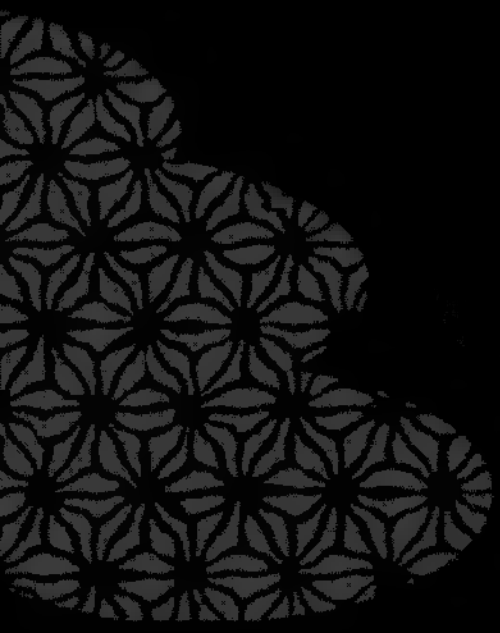
...
MMBL
THOSE PEOPLE KNOW AOI!
MMBL
WHAT'LL I DO?
...
MMBL
...
MMBL
...
MMBL
YES, THAT'S IT.
WHAT WERE YOU SAYING, ISE?

I WILL DEVOUR THEM.
THAT GIRL IS AN AYAKASHI.

WHAT?
HMM...
I WONDER HOW MUCH SHE CAN ACCOMPLISH.

I WON'T LAY A HAND ON HER.
VHHM
SHE BARELY EVEN CASTS A SHADOW.
I WANT TO PLAY WITH SOMEONE...
...CHAOTIC LIKE YOU...

Chapter 28 End



The DEMON PRINCE of MOMOCHI HOUSE

The DEMON PRINCE of MOMOCHI HOUSE

CHAPTER 29

Himari in Ayahashi Land

SHALL WE MAKE A WAGER, NUE?
LET'S SEE WHETHER HIMARI CAN FIND YOUR LOST PAST...
...BEFORE YOUR SOUL COMPLETELY MERGES WITH THE NUE.

BLUNT
I WON'T MAKE A WAGER WITH YOU.
...
...
IN EXCHANGE ...
...I WON'T LAY A HAND ON THAT GIRL.
...
YOU TRUST HER, DON'T YOU?
IF YOU DO, THERE SHOULDN'T BE A PROBLEM.
YOU ONLY BENEFIT.
NOTHING GOOD EVER COMES FROM DEALING WITH YOU.
LOOK.
I'M INSIDE MOMOCHI HOUSE.
IT'S PROOF THAT YOU'RE NOT ENTIRELY OPPOSED TO ME.
THERE'S NOTHING TO TALK ABOUT.
TMP

PLAY A GAME WITH ME.
BOTH YOU...
...AND I...
...WON'T INTERFERE WITH THAT GIRL.
BUT...
IF SHE DOESN'T FIND YOUR PAST...
...I'LL TAKE IT FOR MYSELF.
WHAT IS IT?

SOMETHING YOU LOST ONCE TO A HUMAN...
...CAN'T BE ALL THAT VALUABLE, RIGHT?
LET'S BEGIN.
TELL... ME... NOW!
QUIT PESTERING ME!
I WANT YOU TO TELL ME!
I'M SERIOUS!
KRIK KRIK KRIK
THEY WEREN'T AOI'S PARENTS?
YOU SAID THAT WASN'T AOI'S FAMILY.
ISE...

NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT, YOU MUST KNOW ALL ABOUT HIS FAMILY!
AOI MENTIONED SOMETHING BEFORE...
I HAD MY SHIKIGAMI INVESTIGATE.
APPARENTLY IN THE OUTSIDE WORLD, IT'S AS IF I NEVER EXISTED.
IT WAS SO LONG AGO... I DON'T REALLY REMEMBER.
LIAR!!
You can't fool me!
OKAY THEN!

WHAT DID YOU MEAN WHEN YOU SAID AKANE WAS AN AYAKASHI?
JUST THAT.
I SAID SHE WAS AN AYAKASHI BECAUSE SHE IS ONE. IT'S NOTHING TO DO WITH YOU...
BUT IT'S SOMETHING TO DO WITH AOI?
...

WE ARE SHIKIGAMI.
YUKARI...
HIMARI.
ISE!
KLAK
YUKARI...
GLOOM
ANY-WAY...
...I'M SURE YOU REALIZE...
WE CANNOT TELL YOU...
...ANYTHING THAT AOI WON'T.

I CAN'T ASK THAT FAMILY...
IF HE'S THE CHILD THEY LOST...
...WHETHER THEY REMEMBER AOI.
NO...
I KNOW...
...BUT I'M AT A DEAD END.
...THIS ISN'T WHAT AOI— OR RATHER, NUE—MEANT...
...WHEN HE SAID...
THEY PROBABLY DON'T EVEN REMEMBER.
IT'S AS IF I NEVER EXISTED.
...YOU COULD LOOK INTO HIS PAST.
SIGH
AOI'S PAST...

HE'S ON THE VERGE OF FORGETTING HIMSELF.
WAS FORGOTTEN BY EVERYONE.
THE THINGS THAT MAKE ME WHO I AM.
MY MEMORIES
WHAT WOULD I DO IN HIS SITUATION?
IF...
...I DIDN'T HAVE THOSE THINGS...
MY PAST
GLOW
KLATT
KLATT
IS IT TRYING TO SCARE ME? I WON'T FALL FOR THAT
KLATT
KLATT
KLATT
KLATT
JOLT
IT'S SUCH A VAGUE FEELING...
INSIDE THAT CHEST OF DRAWERS
OH
NO...
WHAT WAS THAT? A LESSER YOKAI?!

KLAK

...IS SHOWING ME A PATH.

THE WINTER CHERRY LANTERN...

...

I HAVE TO GO.

GLOW

JUST ONCE...

GLOW

BUT ONLY ONCE.

IT'S SUPPOSED TO LIGHT THE WAY OF THE PATH TO TRUTH.

THAT LANTERN...

THE WINTER CHERRY LANTERN...
THAT LANTERN...
IT'S SUPPOSED TO LIGHT THE WAY OF THE PATH TO TRUTH.

FLASH
...IS SHOWING ME A PATH.
...
I HAVE TO GO.
GLOW
JUST ONCE...
GLOW
BUT ONLY ONCE.

TUP
WHERE AM I HEADED?
KLAK
WHAT WILL THIS ANSWER?
IT'S PITCH BLACK. AM I IN THE SPIRITUAL REALM?
I DON'T HAVE THAT TRIANGLUAR HEADPIECE TO PROTECT ME.
I'M ON MY OWN.
BUT...
GRIT

I'M SURE THERE'S SOMETHING AT THE END OF THIS PATH.
IT'S THE PATH TO TRUTH.
GLOW
WHAT'S THIS?
HM...
AREN'T YOU GLAD YOU ACCEPTED THE WAGER?
SUFF
IT APPEARS THAT GIRL HAS WANDERED INTO THE SPIRITUAL REALM.
AND SHE SEEMS TO BE CARRYING AN INTERESTING-LOOKING LANTERN.
WHEN DID HIMARI...
NEKO-BABA'S HAIR ORNAMENT.

IF SHE HAPPENS TO COME ACROSS THESE AYAKASHI...
SHOOM
...I WON'T INCITE THEM BY REVEALING SHE'S A MOMOCHI.
OF COURSE NOT.
SUFF
ANY AYAKASHI WHO HAPPEN BY...

...WILL QUICKLY LOSE SIGHT OF HER PATH.
SO...
WHAT WILL YOU DO IF I WIN?
...
THAT'S...

...A GATE-WAY?
...
SHE'S REACHED THE GUARDIAN OF THE GATE.
OH MY...

THE PATH GOES THROUGH IT...
...IS THIS GATE.
THE ONLY THING HERE...
TMP
I'D LIKE YOU TO OPEN THIS GATE!
IS ANYONE HERE?
TOK TOK TOK
IN THAT CASE...
I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN IT WOULDN'T BUDGE.
URGH!
I GUESS NOT...
SILENCE
VOON
HMM...

YOU SMELL...
...VERY NICE...
YEEEEK!
WHY WOULD YOU SCREAM LIKE THAT?
AH... YOU'RE HUMAN, AREN'T YOU?
I NEVER EXPECTED ONE OF YOU TO COME ALL THE WAY HERE.
AN AYAKASHI ?

YOU SEEM LIKE A TASTY SNACK
THAT WOULD GO WELL WITH SOME SAKE
N...

GYAAH!!!
JOLT
I have no energy without it...
THERE'S NO MORE SAKE!
I'M OUT!
PLIP
SHK
SHK
UMP
HE GAVE UP ALREADY ?!
I JUST CAN'T DO THIS WITHOUT LIQUOR.
I DON'T FEEL LIKE WORKING ANYMORE.
WORK?!
YOU MEAN THIS GATE-
YEAH, I'M THE GUARDIAN OF THE GATE.

THE GUARDIAN OF THE GATE!
OPEN THIS GATE!
PLEASE!
I WANT TO PASS THROUGH.
WHAT FOR?
...
I WANT TO GO TO THE PLACE THIS WINTER CHERRY LANTERN...
...IS LEADING ME.

I'M SEARCHING FOR THE PAST OF SOMEONE WHO IS IMPORTANT TO ME.

OH?
IF SO...

WHERE'S YOUR ENTRANCE PASS?
HUH?
I DON'T HAVE ONE.
...
IN ORDER TO PASS THROUGH THIS GATEWAY IN THE SPIRITUAL REALM, YOU NEED AN ENTRANCE PASS.
IF YOU DON'T HAVE ONE...
...I'LL HAVE TO ACCEPT A SOUL.
B-BUT THEN...
...I'LL DIE ONCE YOU OPEN IT! STOP TEASING ME.
IT'S NO BIG DEAL.
ANYONE'S SOUL WILL DO.

JUST
!
AND IF YOU CAN'T DO THAT, WELL...
GIVE ME THE NEXT MOST IMPORTANT THING AFTER YOUR SOUL...
...YOUR NAME.
MY...
MY NAME?
THAT'S RIGHT.
GIVE ME YOUR NAME.
OH?

SO YOU'RE THE MOMOCHI GIRL I'VE BEEN HEARING ABOUT...
"HIMARI MOMOCHI"...
HM.
THAT EXPLAINS WHY YOU SMELL SO TASTY.
IF ONLY I HAD SOME SAKE.
BUT...
I DON'T THINK I CAN TAKE THE MOMOCHI NAME FROM YOU.
HI-MA-RI. I SEE...
SO THAT'S HOW YOU WRITE IT...
DO YOU SEE SOME-THING?

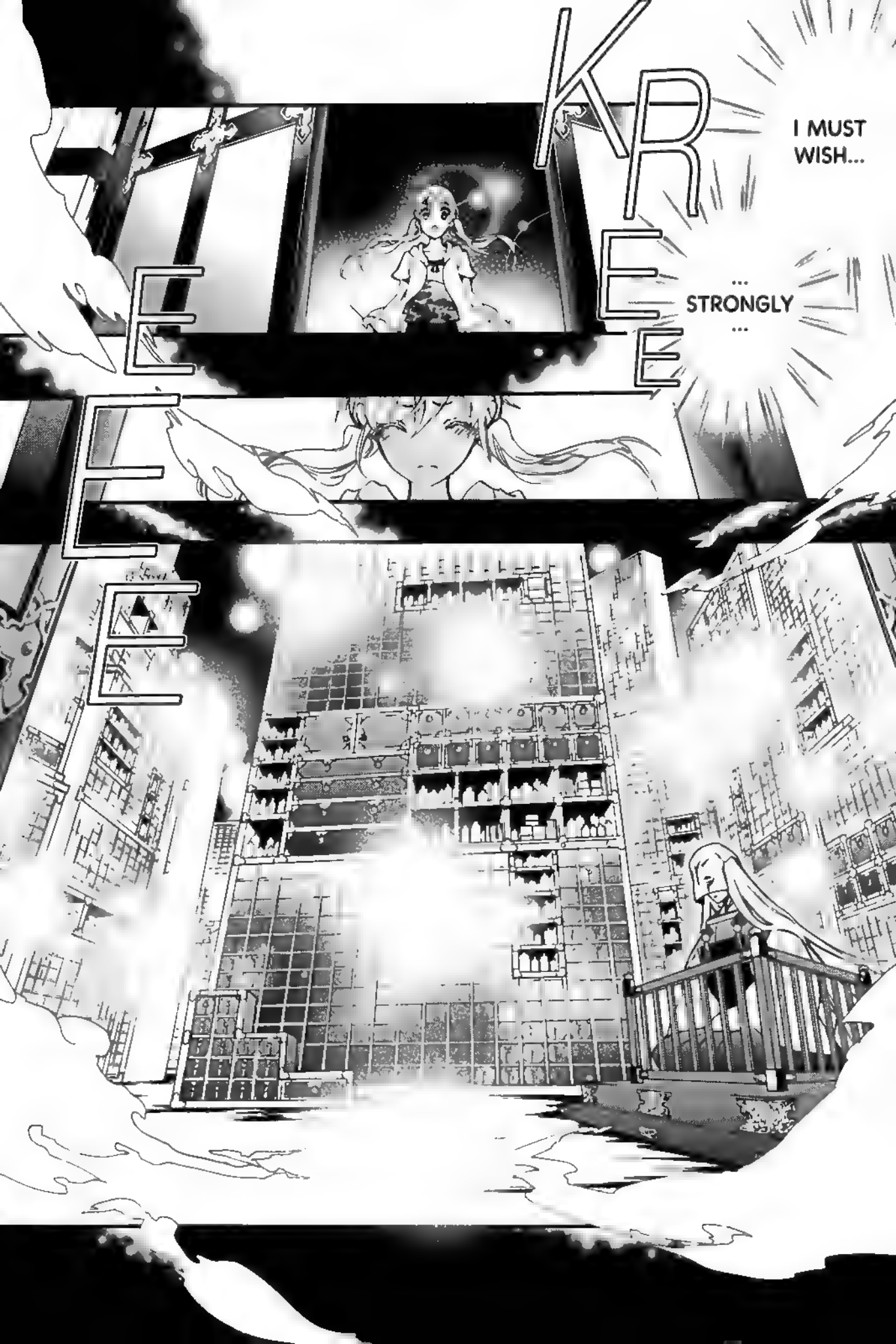
I SEE ALL THE BONDS AND KARMA SURROUNDING YOU.
I HAVE AN IDEA.
YOUR TRUE NAME... I'LL TAKE SOMETHING FROM THAT.
I'M TAKING ONE KANJI.
N...
NO!
MY TRUE NAME?

HUH?

THIS IS QUITE NICE. AN UNUSUAL FLAVOR...
FOOM
OH?
THE LANTERN...
IT BROKE APART.
...TOOK THE PLACE OF YOUR TRUE NAME.
THE "LIGHT" OF THAT WINTER CHERRY LANTERN...
GULP
WHY?
I'LL ACCEPT IT AS PAYMENT.

YOU DON'T SEEM TO KNOW...
...THE TRUE NAME YOUR PARENTS GAVE YOU.
THE *HI* IN YOUR NAME IS THE KANJI FOR "LIGHT."
THE NAME MY PARENTS GAVE ME...

I DIDN'T KNOW MY NAME COULD BE WRITTEN THAT WAY.
I ALWAYS THOUGHT IT WAS MEANT TO BE IN HIRAGANA.
IT HAS SIGNIFICANCE. THAT'S PROBABLY WHY THE LANTERN POPPED.
SIGNIFI-CANCE ?
NOW THEN.
I'M OPENING THE GATE...
...TO THE PLACE YOU WISH TO GO.
BUT...
...NOW THAT THE LANTERN IS BROKEN, I CAN'T SEE THE PATH.
THAT IS NOT A PROBLEM.
THIS GATE CAN CONNECT YOU...
...TO ANY LOCATION WITH A WISH.
A WISH...


KREEEEEEEE
I MUST WISH...
...STRONGLY...

TMP
THIS PLACE...
WELCOME.
HOW NICE OF YOU TO VISIT.
THESE ARE THE DRAWERS OF THOUGHT. THIS PLACE IS THE STORAGE ROOM FOR THE MEMORY OF ALL THINGS.
!

SHELVES OF MEMO-RIES...
SEE YOU LATER, MOMOCHI GIRL.
KAEEEE
BUT...
...THANK YOU!
KA-CHAK
I DON'T THINK WE'LL MEET AGAIN!
I HOPE TO HAVE SOME SAKE THE NEXT TIME WE MEET.
KIK

ARE YOU SEARCHING FOR THE PAST?
VISITOR...
THE GATE DISAP-PEARED.
VOON
THAT'S RIGHT.
CAN YOU TELL?
ONE'S KARMA...
...ONE'S CONNEC-TIONS AND MEMORIES...
EVERYTHING ABOUT A PERSON IS STORED IN THESE DRAWERS.
THAT IS WHAT THIS PLACE IS FOR.

GIVE ME YOUR NAME.
OH
I'M HIMARI MOMOCHI!!
BUT...
I CAME HERE TO FIND THE PAST OF SOMEONE IMPORTANT TO ME.
SOMEONE BY THE NAME OF AOI NANAMORI...
I UNDER-STAND.
NOD
KLAT
KLAT
KLAT
KLAT
KLAT
THE DRAW-ERS.

...TO OPEN A SINGLE DRAWER.

...A SOUL IS ONLY ALLOWED...

...IS YOUR DRAWER...
THAT THERE...
HIMARI MOMOCHI
...HIMARI MOMOCHI.
MINE...
FOR EXAMPLE...
HUH?
WITHIN IT...
...ARE YOUR MEMORIES AND KARMA.
IT CONTAINS KNOWLEDGE OF YOUR PARENTS.
KNOWLEDGE OF... MY PARENTS...

THEY DIED IN AN ACCIDENT.
Will
ALL I KNOW IS WHAT I READ IN THAT WILL.
I CAN'T REMEMBER ANYTHING...
...ABOUT THEM.
YOU WILL NEVER BE ABLE TO LOOK INSIDE.
DO YOU WISH TO PROCEED?
THEN...
WHAT ABOUT THE KANJI FOR *MA*?
AND *RI*?
THE HI IN YOUR NAME IS THE KANJI FOR "LIGHT."
THE TRUE NAME YOUR PARENTS GAVE YOU...
WHY DID THEY CHOOSE THAT NAME FOR ME?
WHAT KIND OF PEOPLE WERE THEY?
...

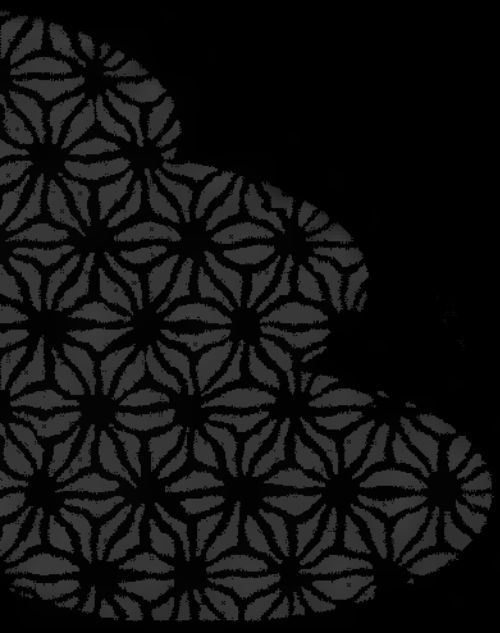
EVEN IF I CAN ONLY EVER OPEN ONE...
KLENCH
...I CHOOSE AOI NANAMORI'S DRAWER.
AOI NANAMORI

SEARCHING FOR YOUR LOST PAST...
...AND ARRIVING HERE...
...IN THIS PLACE...
...HAS MADE ME REALIZE...
AND I ALSO REALIZE...
...JUST HOW STRONG YOU ARE.
...HOW DISTRAUGHT YOU ARE.
AOI...
YOU'RE ALWAYS SMILING.

I'VE MADE IT THIS FAR...
FOR...
...FOR THAT SMILE.
...YOUR TRUE SMILE.

VOOSH
SHU
...
DO YOU WISH TO PROCEED?

Chapter 29/End



The DEMON PRINCE of MOMOCHI HOUSE

The DEMON PRINCE of MOMOCHI HOUSE

CHAPTER 30

The Tale of Aoi's Past

I WILL TELL YOU THE STORY OF MY PAST.
CLOSE YOUR EYES.
A YOUNG...
...AOI?
KRIII
KRIII

IN THE OUTSKIRTS OF TOWN, BY THE BASE OF THE MOUNTAINS TO THE NORTH...
...THERE WAS A HOUSE. DESPITE HAVING A RATHER OLD WELL AND STORE-HOUSE...
...IT WAS OTHERWISE A FAIRLY ORDINARY RESIDENCE.
MY FATHER WAS A QUIET MAN. HE OFTEN HAD TO BE AWAY FROM HOME FOR WORK.
THUP
THUP
MOM! CAN I COME IN?
AOI...
THUP
THUP
WHAT IS IT? PLAYING HIDE-AND-SEEK?
Here.
SHUF
I FOUND YOU, AOI!

PWOP
PWOP
PWOP
YOU ALWAYS HIDE AROUND MOM.
AWW...
WHAT A MAMA'S BOY!
HE'S THE YOUNGEST. HE CAN'T HELP IT.
YOU THINK SO?
UH
BUT
IT'S YOUR TURN TO BE "IT," AOI.
TMP
TMP
TMP
TMP
NOW COUNT TO TEN.
ONE... TWO...
... THREE...
I don't want to be "it"
MY MOTHER HAD BEEN SICK FOR A LONG TIME AND NEEDED TO STAY IN BED.
BUT THANKS TO MY SEVEN SIBLINGS, I WAS NEVER LONELY.

ARE YOU READY?
NOT YET!
NOT YET!
THUP
ARE YOU-
I'M READY!
ARE YOU HERE?
KRIK
I'M READY
...
SHUSH!
I ALWAYS TELL YOU, DON'T I?
PRETEND YOU DON'T SEE THEM...
...AOI.

THEY'RE CALLED AYAKASHI.
...AND SOMETIMES THEY SCARE ME BY SAYING I LOOK DELICIOUS.
BUT THEY ALWAYS APPEAR SUDDENLY...
I'M SCARED.
CHASE THEM AWAY, BIG SIS.
THEY EXIST EVERYWHERE.
BUT THEY USUALLY ONLY TRY TO FRIGHTEN PEOPLE.
YOU MUSTN'T RELY ON US, AOI...

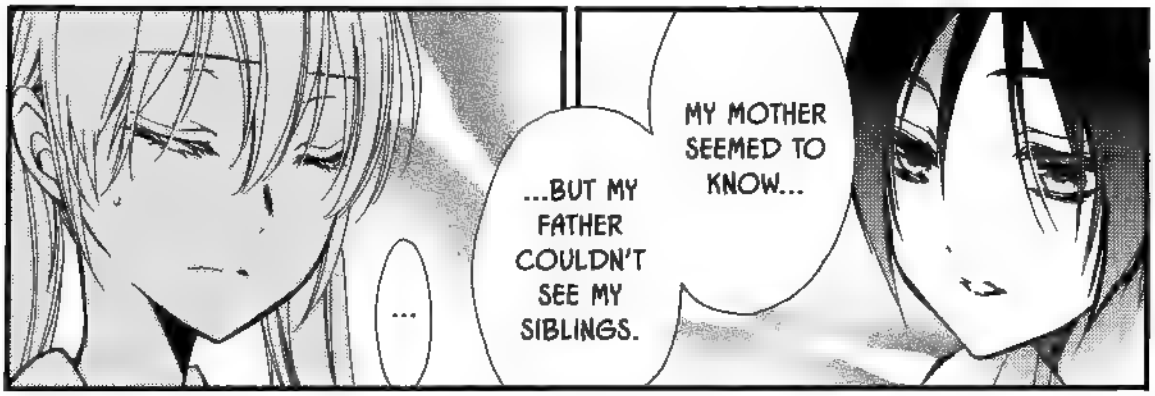
...SO THAT YOU CAN LEARN TO SURVIVE ON YOUR OWN.
MOM PASSED AWAY...
LET'S PLAY HIDE-AND-SEEK, AOI.
HUH? BUT...
COUNT TO TEN...
FOUR ...
...FIVE, SIX...
... SEVEN ...
...
TMP
TMP
TMP
TMP

ARE YOU READY?
..AND MY SEVEN BROTHERS AND SISTERS ALSO DISAPPEARED
KRE
E
E
E
KA-CHI-

MY MOM WAS UP IN THE SKY...
...SO I ASKED MY FATHER WHERE MY SIBLINGS HAD GONE.
HE GAVE ME A TROUBLED LOOK AND SAID...
YOU'RE AN ONLY CHILD.
AOI...
I NEVER GAVE UP AND KEPT LOOKING FOR MY SIBLINGS...
BUT EVENTU-ALLY I UNDER-STOOD...

...THAT I COULD SEE...

...THINGS THAT SHOULDN'T BE SEEN.



Zashiki warashi are child spirits that inhabit homes and bring great fortune.

NOW THAT IT WAS ONLY ME AND MY FATHER, THE HOUSE BECAME VERY QUIET.
BECAUSE I ASKED ABOUT PHANTOM SIBLINGS...
...MY FATHER THOUGHT I WAS LONELY.
SO ONE YEAR LATER...
...HE MARRIED HIS SECRETARY.
HELLO, AOI.
SHE WAS A KIND WOMAN.
OH.
WHAT'S THE MATTER, AOI? WHY HAVE YOU MADE THIS MESS?
How unusual.
HEE
I THOUGHT ...
...IF I DID THIS, BIG SIS AND THE OTHERS WOULD COME BACK...
OH
"BIG SIS"?

AH. NOTHING.
AAAH!
JOLT
AOI?
SLAP
...
OH. SORRY...
I'M SORRY...
I SAW SOMETHING DARK ON YOUR SHOULDER.
THEY'RE CALLED AYAKASHI.
I WONDER ...
...IF AOI IS MAKING UP THESE STORIES BECAUSE HE HATES ME AND WANTS ME TO LEAVE.
THAT'S NOT TRUE.

I WAS TRYING TO GET AOI, BUT THIS ONE SEEMS EASIER.
ANOTHER WEAKLING ENTERED THIS HOUSE.
CAN WE EAT IT?
PRETEND YOU DON'T SEE THEM.
SOON AFTER, MY STEPMOTHER BECAME PREGNANT.
THEY COME HERE BECAUSE OF ME.
I UNDER-STAND NOW...
OH?
JOLT
I TRIED MY BEST TO ISOLATE MYSELF.
I DIS-TANCED MYSELF FROM MY FRIENDS...
...AND MY PARENTS.
HEY!
WHY DON'T YOU EVER COME HOME BY DINNERTIME NO MATTER HOW MANY TIMES I REMIND YOU?
I SEARCHED SO LONG FOR YOU!
...
BUT...
MY STEP-MOTHER'S DIFFICULT PREGNANCY HAD MADE HER ANXIOUS.
THAT WASN'T GOOD.
LOOK AT ME!
BAM

DON'T YOU KNOW HOW WORRIED I AM ABOUT YOU?
...
WHY ARE YOU LOOKING AT ME LIKE THAT?!
SLAP
THINGS GOT WORSE...
...BUT I NEVER SAID A WORD.
THUD
THAT LOOK AGAIN!

YES
DO IT MORE
HEH HEH
YOU KEEP SAYING YOU SEE BAD THINGS...
...TO GET RID OF ME AND MY UNBORN CHILD!
BACK THEN I DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO EXPEL AYAKASHI.
ALL I COULD DO WAS PRETEND I DIDN'T SEE THEM AND TRY TO ENDURE IT.
THAT'S WHEN...
...I MET NACHI IN THE PARK.
HE WAS THE ONLY ONE WHO UNDER-STOOD.
HE COULD SEE AYAKASHI LIKE ME.
MAYBE EVERYONE WILL BE HAPPY IF YOU DISAPPEAR.

I THOUGHT ABOUT IT.
HE MIGHT BE RIGHT.
IF I GO TO MOMOCHI HOUSE...
AYAKASHI COME HERE BECAUSE OF ME.
...AND LEAVE EVERY-ONE...
... ALONE ...
AOI!
DON'T YOU KNOW HOW WORRIED I AM ABOUT YOU?

...
I DON'T WANT TO...
THIS ENTIRE TIME...
SUFF
SUFF
...I FOCUSED SO MUCH ON WHAT I SHOULDN'T SEE THAT I OVERLOOKED OTHER THINGS.

KLAT
I'M HOME!
I REALLY DON'T WANT TO GO AWAY.
THUP THUP
MOM... WHERE ARE YOU?
FIRST, I'LL SAY SORRY..
THUP THUP
I'LL SAY SORRY...
...AND TELL HER...
...I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO HAVING A YOUNGER SISTER.
KLAK
JOLT
OH!
MOM...
ZZZ
PHOO
OH, SHE'S JUST ASLEEP.
...
MOM, LISTEN...
BBMP

YOU SHOULD JUST DISAPPEAR.
YOU CAN HEAR ME, CAN'T YOU?
Z Z Z
HUH?
YOU SHOULD DISAP- PEAR.
HEH ...
PUNCH

...THOUGH I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW THE WAY.
BEFORE I REALIZED IT, I WAS RUNNING AS FAST AS I COULD...
...THROUGH THE MOUNTAINS TO THAT HOUSE...
MY LITTLE SISTER BECAME AN AYAKASHI BECAUSE OF ME.

AFTER RUNNING AND RUNNING...
...I EVEN-TUALLY REACHED MOMOCHI HOUSE.
...HIMARI MOMOCHI.
I THINK YOU KNOW THE REST...

PLIP

SUEE
IF YOU CAN EVER GET OUT OF HERE, DON'T CRY ANYMORE.
...IS AOI'S PAST.
THIS...
DO YOU PITY ME?

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
THERE IS NO PATHWAY BACK.
YOU'LL BE HERE FOREVER.
I'LL KEEP YOU...
THIS CHILD...
OH
HUH?
...INSIDE ME!
!
WOOSH

AAAAH!
GRAB
THIS WAY.
RUN.
HUH?

THE RECORD KEEPER?!
!
SHFF
EVERYTHING STORED WITHIN THAT DRAWER...
...REPRESENTS AOI'S KARMA.
THROUGH NO FAULT OF HIS OWN...
...HE HAS HAD TO DEAL WITH MISFORTUNE SINCE BIRTH.

"MISFOR-
TUNE"?
MISFOR-
TUNE
AND
GOOD
LUCK...
HER
BODY...
...ARE
UNPREDICT-
ABLE.
THAT IS
THE WAY OF
THINGS.
...IS
GETTING
YOUNGER.

BECAUSE
OF HIS
IMMENSE
KARMA...
...AOI HAS
INCREDIBLE
AYAKASHI
POWERS
DESPITE BEING
HUMAN.
ALSO
...
WHY?

IT'S WHY HE
IS FATED TO
HAVE WEAK
BONDS WITH
HIS BLOOD
RELATIVES.
DON'T
LEAVE ME.
STAY BY MY
SIDE

YOU MUSTN'T LOOK BACK!
IF YOU DO, YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO RETURN HOME.
VOON
ARE YOU...?
VISH
LEAVING IS FINE.
RETURN-ING IS SCARY.
VISH
VISH

THESE...
...ARE THE SEVEN SIBLINGS...
WE ARE AYAKASHI.
WE NEVER ASSOCIATE WITH HUMANS.
BUT...
...HIMARI MOMOCHI...

PLEASE...
...LOOK AFTER AOI FOR US.
...
WAIT...

OH
I'M BACK IN THE ROOM WHERE I STARTED.
THUP
...
THANK YOU.
THANK YOU, AOI'S BROTHERS AND SISTERS...
TMP TMP TMP TMP

TMP
TMP
AOI!

WHAT'S THE MATTER?
IT'S STILL DAYBREAK.

NUE...
HE HASN'T...
...TRANSFORMED BACK.

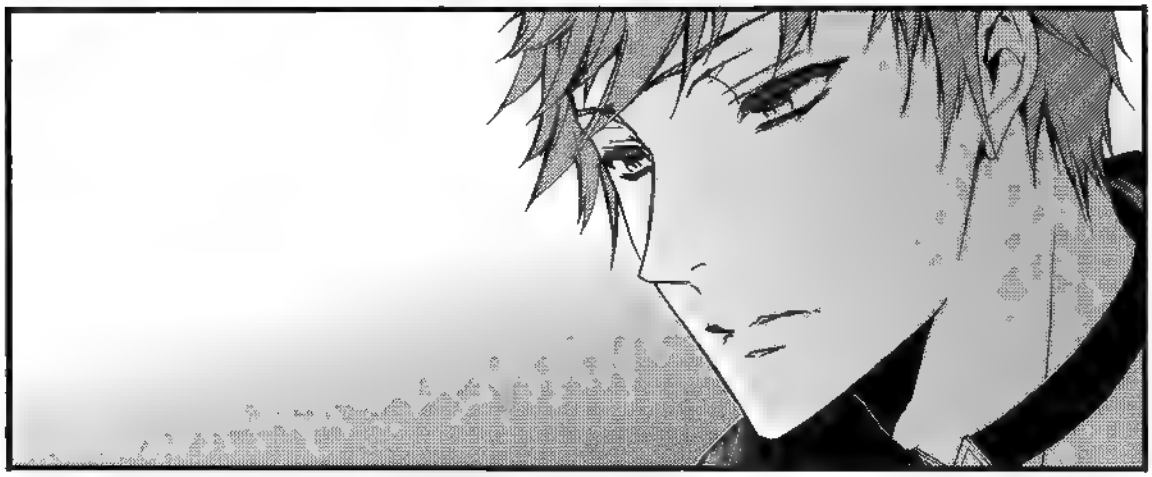
BLUSH
I-IT'S NOT LIKE THAT!
SINCE YOU'RE HERE...
I NEVER EXPECTED YOU TO SNEAK INTO MY BED-ROOM...
...WHILE NO ONE WAS WATCHING.
COME CLOSER.
SHMP

I WENT AND FOUND...
...THE DRAWERS OF THOUGHT.
PERHAPS...
...YOU DREAMT IT.
HEH
IT WASN'T A DREAM.
DON'T CHANGE THE SUBJECT.
THAT'S...
I...
...DISCOVERED AOI'S PAST.
BUT I GUESS IT WASN'T ENOUGH FOR YOU TO REVERT BACK.
SUFF

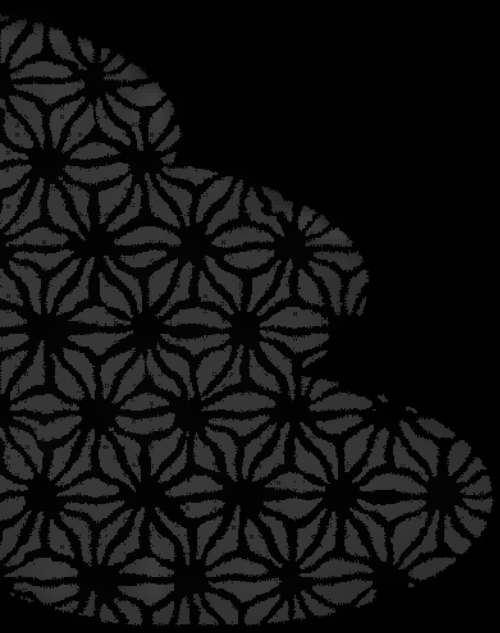
TUG
WHAT?
DO YOU DISLIKE ME...AS AN AYAKASHI?
YOU'RE A BAD GIRL...
...WHO DISOBEYS ME.
YOU MUSTN'T LOOK AT ME.

PERHAPS...
...YOU'RE ALREADY ENTRANCED BE ME.

HM? WHAT'S THIS?
THUP
To Himari
To Himari

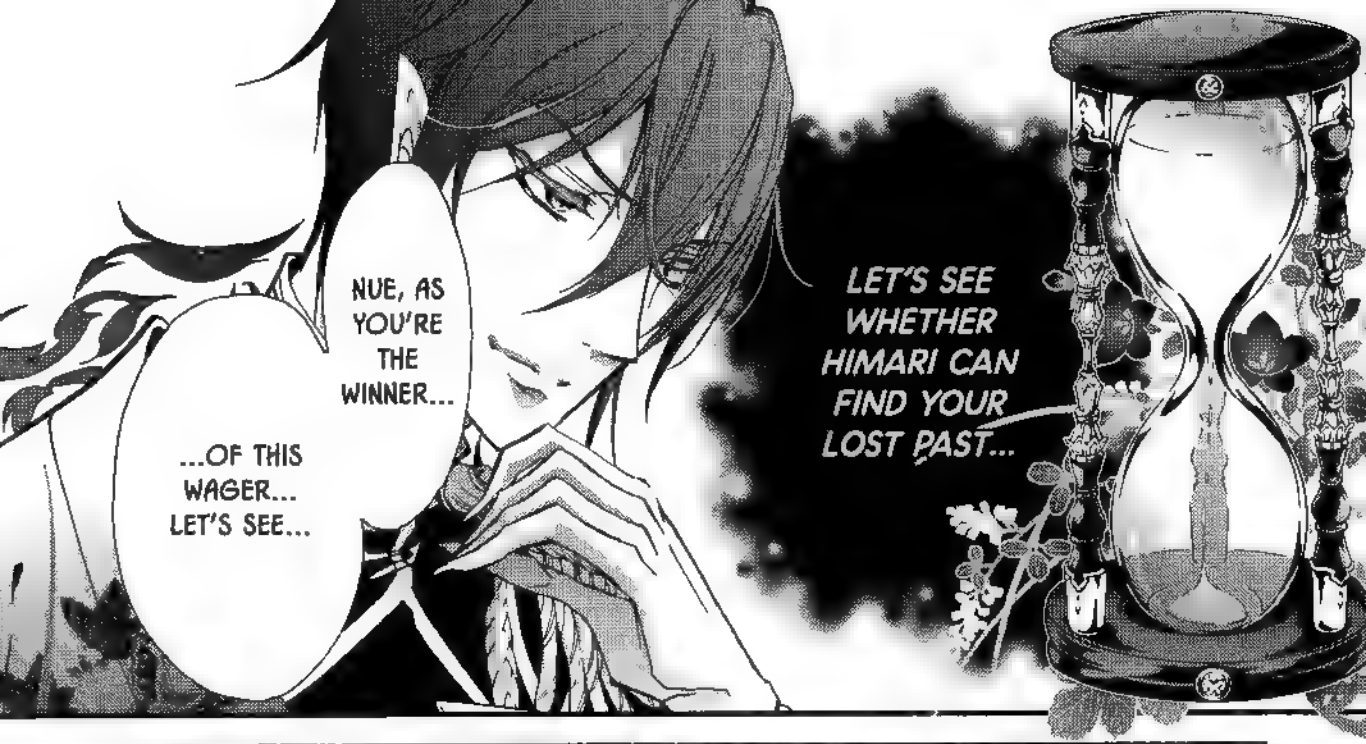


Chapter 30 End



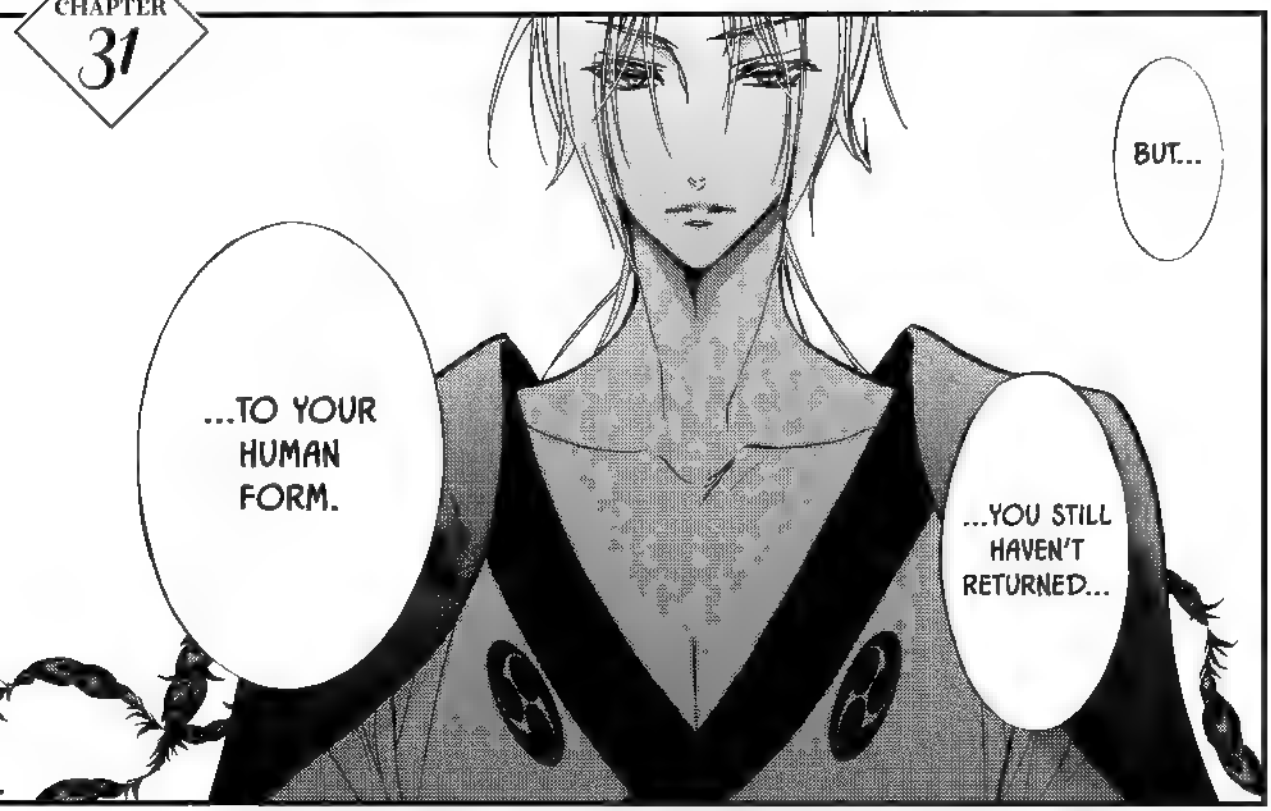
The DEMON PRINCE of MOMOCHI HOUSE

The
DEMON
PRINCE
of MOMOCHI
HOUSE


NUE, AS YOU'RE THE WINNER...
...OF THIS WAGER... LET'S SEE...
LET'S SEE WHETHER HIMARI CAN FIND YOUR LOST PAST...

...
HOW SELFLESS!
GET OUT.
I'LL GRANT YOU A WISH-

CHAPTER 31


BUT...
...TO YOUR HUMAN FORM.
...YOU STILL HAVEN'T RETURNED...

I SHOULD JUST MAKE YOU MINE.

THE NUE IS DRAWING ME IN...

YOU MUSTN'T LOOK AT ME.

PERHAPS YOU'RE ALREADY ENTRANCED BE ME.

YOU'RE A BAD GIRL WHO DISOBEYS ME.

CHAPTER 31

A Faceless Visitor

CHAPTER 31 A Faceless Visitor

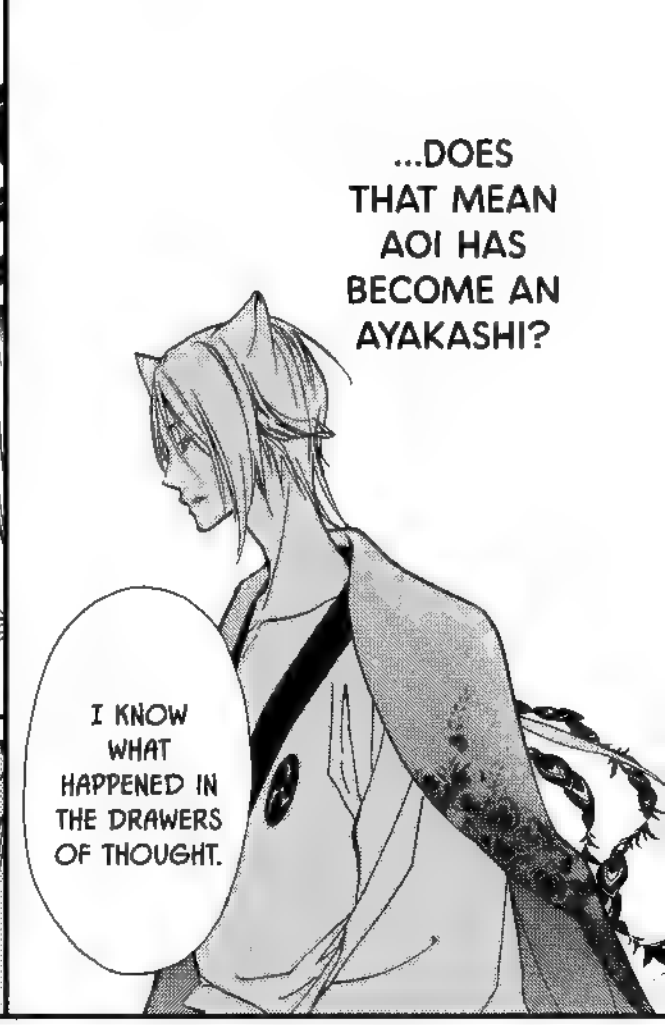
I SHOULD JUST MAKE YOU MINE.
YOU MUSTN'T LOOK AT ME.
THE NUE IS DRAWING ME IN.
YOU'RE A BAD GIRL WHO DISOBEYS ME.

H-HEY, THAT'S NOT FAIR!
OH
SHO
VE
I CAME HERE...TO DISCUSS SOMETHING IMPORTANT!
I WANT TO TALK ABOUT...
...
YOU'RE ONLY SAYING THAT BECAUSE YOU'RE THE NUE RIGHT NOW.
BLUSH

...AOI'S PAST.
SHMP
SO?
BEFORE WE START...
...ISN'T THIS ROOM KIND OF DARK?
IT'S MORNING.
AN HOUR-GLASS?
THE FACT I CAN'T SEE HIM WELL...
...MAKES ME UNEASY.
YOU THINK SO?
GLOW

FOOM
IS THIS BETTER?
THANK YOU.
IT'S AN ORDINARY LIGHT.
THAT'S LIKE MAGIC...
OF COURSE HE COULD DO THAT...
THE NUE IS AN AYAKASHI.
IF HE...
...NEVER TRANSFORMS BACK...

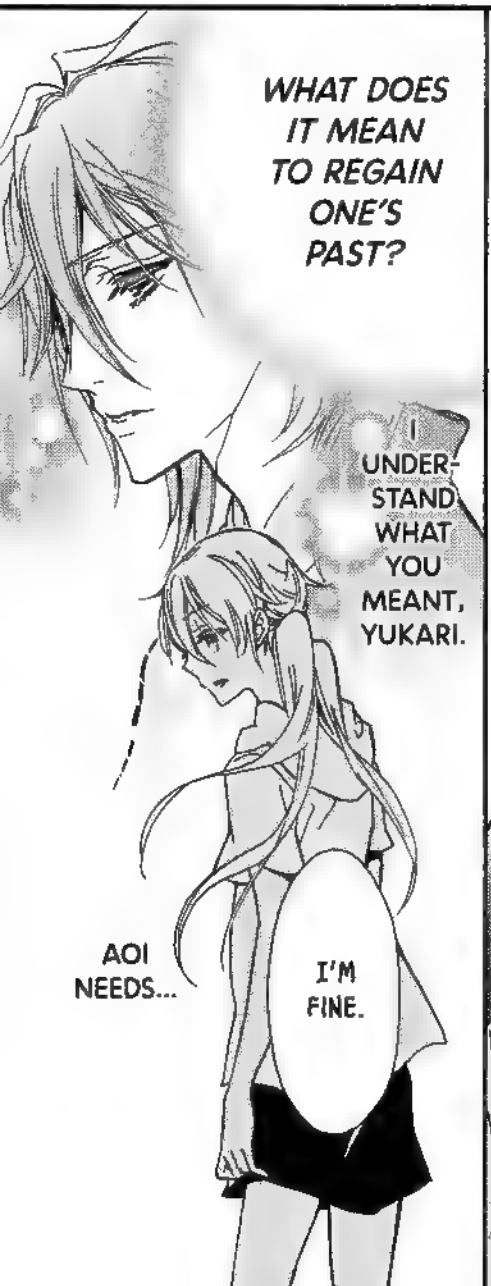
!
YOU KNOW EVERYTHING?
You changed the subject again...


...DOES THAT MEAN AOI HAS BECOME AN AYAKASHI?
I KNOW WHAT HAPPENED IN THE DRAWERS OF THOUGHT.

THAT GIRL IS AN AYAKASHI.
...WAS BORN INTO THE NANAMORI FAMILY?
DO YOU BELIEVE IT'S YOUR FAULT THAT AN AYAKASHI CALLED AKANE...
AOI...

...I VISITED THE NANAMORI FAMILY...
...AND AKANE...
...IS LIVING THERE LIKE A NORMAL CHILD.
I THOUGHT SO.
BUT...
THAT PLACE IS NOT LIKE MOMOCHI HOUSE.
YOU SAW HOW HIDAKA...
...SUFFERED AT HIS HOUSE.

AYAKASHI AND HUMANS CANNOT BE TOGETHER.


WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO REGAIN ONE'S PAST?
I UNDER-STAND WHAT YOU MEANT, YUKARI.
AOI NEEDS...
I'M FINE.

...ARE WHAT KEEPS HIM FROM HIS PAST.
HIMARI?
YUP

AOI'S FEELINGS OF GUILT...
...AND DOUBT...

...TO ACCEPT HIS PAST IN HIS HEART.
...BRING YOU BACK TO YOUR ORIGINAL FORM.
...I WILL...
NO MATTER WHAT...
SWF
SWF
SWF
SWF
FLUP
Aoi is dead.
...THIS LETTER...
TMP
TMP
BECAUSE ...
I HAVE TO.
TMP
...
YOU'RE REALLY GOING?
WAS THIS PATH ALWAYS THIS DARK?
TMP

AKANE KNOWS AOI?
NO ONE REMEMBERS ME OR EVEN KNOWS ABOUT ME.
IS IT BECAUSE AKANE IS AN AYAKASHI?
SNIFF
THERE'S SOMETHING I NEED TO CHECK AT THE NANAMORI HOUSE.

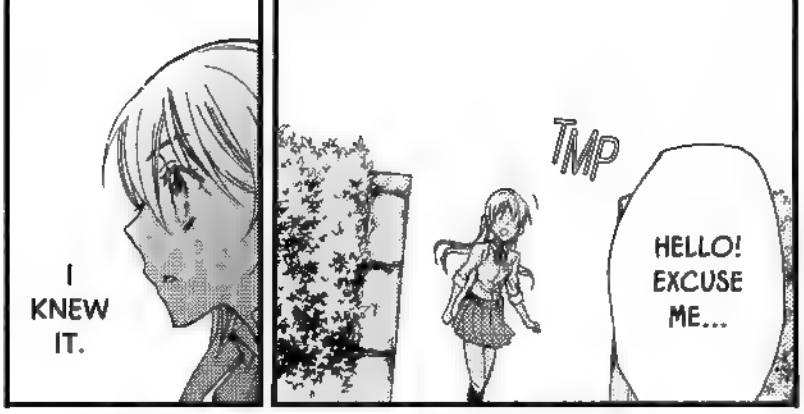
BUT...

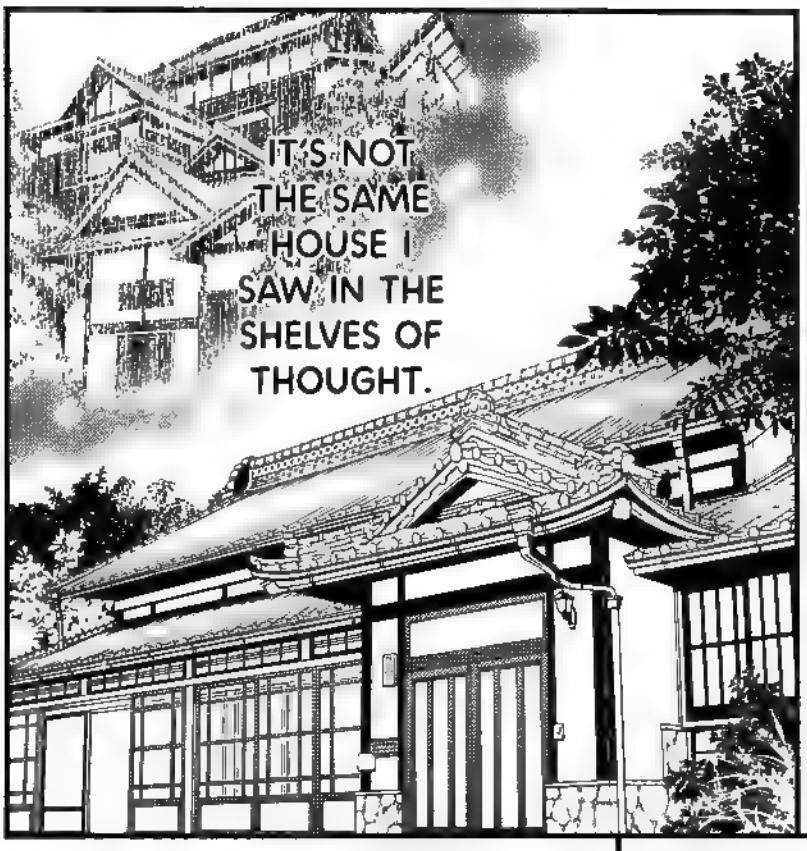
YOU'RE PROBABLY NOT GOING TO TELL ME ANYTHING, ARE YOU?
PRETTY MUCH.

...THANK YOU FOR COMING WITH ME.
...
I...
SWEE

I KNEW IT.
TMP
AKANE!
YOU'RE LOOKING FOR AOI.
SHE'S NOT THE SAME AS BEFORE.
YOU KNOW AOI?

AKANE...!
DASH
VHHHM
DON'T MAKE ANY SUDDEN MOVES!
THIS AREA IS BECOMING PART OF THE SPIRITUAL REALM.
HUH?
SHE'S... GETTING BIGGER.
DASH
ISE?!
I'VE GOT TO CATCH HER.
WAIT, ISE!
EEEEK


I KNEW IT.
TMP
HELLO! EXCUSE ME...


IT'S NOT THE SAME HOUSE I SAW IN THE SHELVES OF THOUGHT.

A SCREAM...
IT WAS NEAR THE NANAMORI HOUSE.

AOI'S FATHER...
I TOLD HER TO CALM DOWN AND WAIT INSIDE.
YES... MY WIFE WAS UPSET.
UM, I HEARD A SCREAM.

...AT THE LOCATION ON THE OLD MAP...
THE OLD HOUSE WAS PROBABLY NEXT TO KAGOME PARK...
YOU...
KLAK

AKANE IS MISSING.
I RAN INTO HER ON THE WAY HERE!
GRAB
REALLY?!
COULD YOU SHOW ME WHERE?
OH... SORRY. ODDLY ENOUGH...
...I KEEP GETTING LOST NEAR THE HOUSE.
AND WE CAN'T MAKE ANY PHONE CALLS... I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON.
THE SPIRITUAL REALM...
WE'LL LOOK FOR HER TOGETHER!
SWF
SWF
YOU'RE RIGHT... THIS PATH SEEMS A LITTLE TOO LONG.

WE'RE GETTING LOST.
I'M PRETTY SURE I SAW HER HERE.
WHAT IN THE WORLD IS GOING ON?
WHY DID YOU COME HERE?
I GOT A LETTER FROM AKANE.
AKANE SENT YOU A LETTER?
YES. UM...
DID YOU...
...
DID YOU COME ALONE?
HUH?
DID YOU...

HUH?
AFTER YOUR LAST VISIT...
...AKANE SAID YOU WERE WITH SOME BOY.
BUT...
PERHAPS HE'S TAKEN AKANE!
...COME WITH THAT SUSPICIOUS-LOOKING BOY?

...MY WIFE AND I SAW ONLY YOU!
WHAT IS HAPPENING?
BEFORE WE MOVED INTO THIS HOUSE...
...THAT MYSTERIOUS YOUNG MAN HAD RETURNED...
WE THOUGHT ...
...BECAUSE ISE IS AN AYAKASHI.
THAT'S RIGHT. HE CAN'T SEE ISE...
PLEASE CALM DOWN. WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THAT?
WHO WAS THIS?
I CAN'T...
...AND HAD TAKEN AKANE AS COMPENSATION.

...THAT MAN PAID US A VISIT.
I'LL TELL YOU ABOUT THE HOUSE WE LIVED IN BEFORE.
MY FIRST WIFE HAD PASSED AWAY...
...AND MY CURRENT WIFE BECAME PREGNANT.
BUT AFTER SHE HAD GIVEN BIRTH, SHE GREW SICK.
EXCUSE ME.
BUT AT THE TIME...
...SO DISTRESSED.
NORMALLY, WE WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN...
SADDENED OVER WHAT HAP-PENED...
BUT THEN...
SHE WAS SADDENED OVER WHAT HAPPENED TO OUR CHILD...
...SHE WAS PROBABLY IN A WEAKENED STATE.

THIS HOUSE IS NOT GOOD FOR YOUR CHILD.
THE MAN INVITED HIMSELF IN...
HE WAS A YOUNG MAN OF OTHER-WORLDLY BEAUTY.
FOR SOME REASON, I CAN'T REMEMBER HIS FACE.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
THE HEAVY AIR IN THE HOUSE BEGAN TO CLEAR.
...AND HE POINTED TO VARIOUS PLACES AROUND THE HOUSE.
AND THERE.
OH... OVER HERE.
THERE ARE QUITE A FEW LIVING HERE.

"AYAKASHI"...
I'M TRYING TO QUELL THE AYAKASHI.
AT THE TIME...
HIS WORDS FELT LIKE THEY HAD TRUTH TO THEM
I THOUGHT IT WOULD LIFT MY WIFE'S SPIRITS...
...SO WE MOVED TO THIS TOWN.
SOON AFTER WE DID...
SHHH

KRAK
...OUR FORMER HOME WAS HIT BY LIGHTNING AND BURNED DOWN.
...WE SUR-VIVED.
THANKS TO THAT YOUNG MAN...
GRIN
AS THAT MAN LEFT, HE SAID...
WHY ARE YOU HERE?
WHO IN THE WORLD ARE YOU?
PLEASE FORGIVE MY INTRU-SION
BUT AT THE SAME TIME, SOMETHING BOTHERED ME.

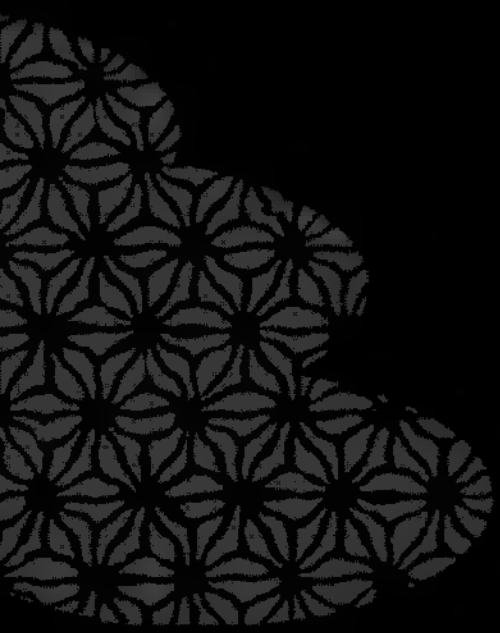
I'M TAKING SOMETHING YOU'VE LOST.

DON'T WORRY.

AGAIN?
...AKANE IS SAFE.
IT'LL BE OKAY. I'M POSITIVE...
...I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO.
...AND AKANE IS GONE...
SO IF A STRANGE BOY HAS APPEARED...
...A MYSTERIOUS GIRL.
YOU'RE RATHER...
SORRY FOR TELLING YOU SUCH STRANGE THINGS.
...
SHE WAS SADDENED OVER WHAT HAPPENED TO OUR CHILD...
UM...
BUT...
...THAT...
...DOESN'T MAKE SENSE.

DO YOU REMEMBER AOI?
WHY?
...DO YOU KNOW ABOUT AOI?
HOW...
YOU REALLY ARE A MYSTERIOUS GIRL.
HE SHOULDN'T REMEMBER HIM AT ALL.

AOI...
I DON'T WANT TO HEAR HIM SAY IT.
NO...
...IS DEAD.

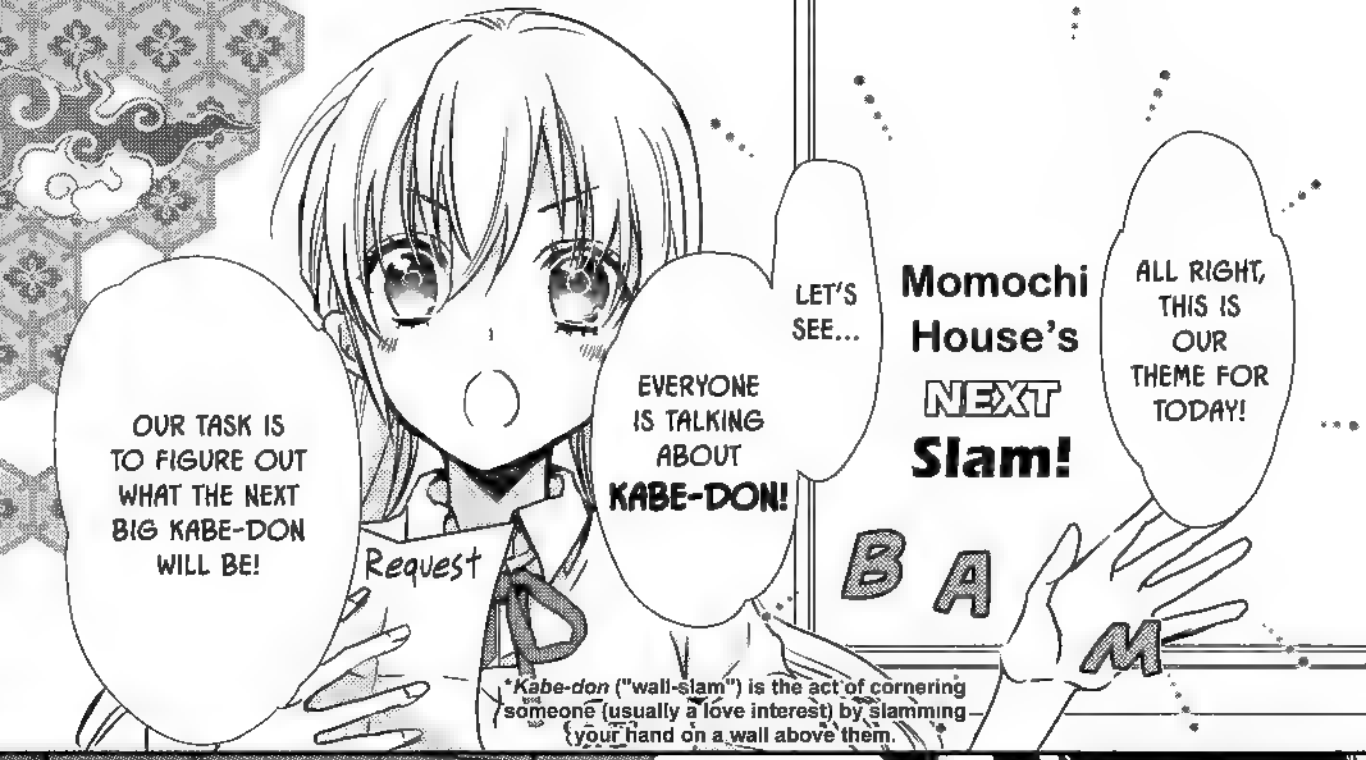


The DEMON PRINCE of MOMOCHI HOUSE

The DEMON PRINCE of MOMOCHI HOUSE

Bonus Stories

- Momochi House's Next Slam! 152
- Momochi Private Academy 157


Momochi House's NEXT Slam!
ALL RIGHT, THIS IS OUR THEME FOR TODAY!
LET'S SEE...
EVERYONE IS TALKING ABOUT KABE-DON!
OUR TASK IS TO FIGURE OUT WHAT THE NEXT BIG KABE-DON WILL BE!
Request
BAM
*Kabe-don ("wall-slam") is the act of cornering someone (usually a love interest) by slamming your hand on a wall above them.

SCRTCH SCRTCH
A KABE-DON IS...
YOU STILL DON'T KNOW ANYTHING, DO YOU?
AO! ...
W-WE'RE STARTING FROM HERE?
WHAT'S A KABE-DON?

THAT WILD ?!
I SEE... THEN HOW ABOUT THIS?
A HEART-FELT...
KRAK
Huh? That?
?
...SOME-THING LIKE THIS. GOT IT?
SWI FF

HERE'S ANOTHER!
UM...
WOULD YOU HAVE PREFERRED AN IKURA-DON?
SWIP
DON
OH!
NOTHING ABOUT FULL COMBO "DONS" FROM VIDEO GAMES!
For legal reasons.
THAT CONSID-ERATE!
KATSU-DON!
DON
!
THEN HOW ABOUT THIS?
DON
"HEAD-DON"
DON

Dizzy
UHH...
FOOF
DON
HM?
DON'T OVERWHELM ME WITH YOUR PRESENCE!
WHAT KIND OF "DON" IS THAT?
A TATAMI-DON?
WHO KNOWS?
IT'S A THIGH-DON.
End

THERE'S STILL MORE!

NEXT UP IS "MOMOCHI PRIVATE ACADEMY"!

TODAY IS VALENTINE'S DAY.
B-BMP
B-BMP
I BROUGHT CHOCO-LATES FOR SOMEONE, BUT...
MRMR MRMR
THERE'S NO WAY HE'LL ACCEPT MY CHOC-OLATES.
Heh
MY BELOVED TEACHER NUE IS SURROUNDED BY GIRLS!
Mr. Nue!
KYAH
SQUEE
ZOOM
In that case, I'll eat them myself!
THOSE CHOCO-LATES...

...IF YOU'RE JUST GOING TO TOSS THEM, I'D LIKE TO HAVE THEM.
AOI?!
Y-YOU DON'T NEED ANY FROM ME. I'M SURE YOU'VE ALREADY RECEIVED A BUNCH OF THEM.
PUOP
UM, BUT...
...I STILL HAVEN'T RECEIVED ANY FROM THE PERSON I TRULY WANT.
B-BMP

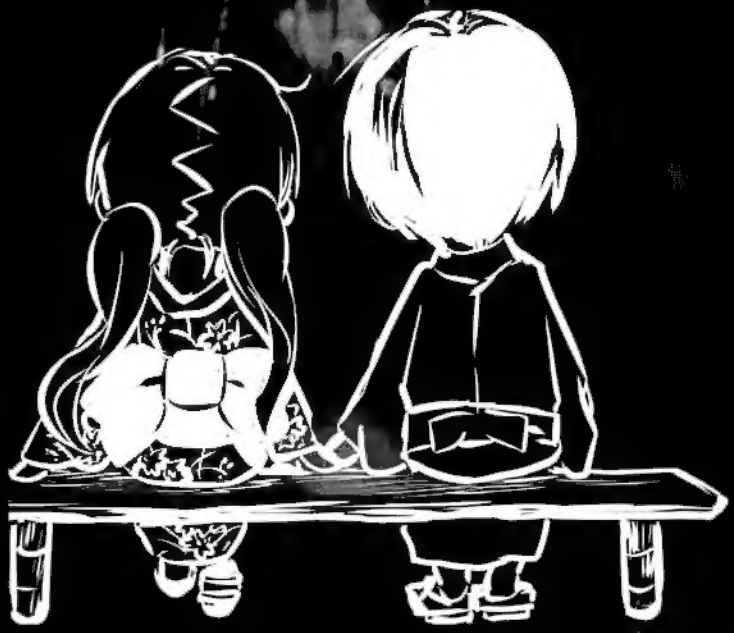
WHAT?! MR. NUE?!
OH
I THOUGHT THOSE CHOCOLATES WERE MEANT FOR ME.
TO WHOM DO YOU REALLY WANT TO GIVE THOSE?
BE TRUE TO YOUR HEART.
YOU SHOULD PICK ME OVER THAT WEIRD TEACHER.
COME ON, HIMARI...
HUH?
HUH?
HUH?

DO YOU WANT SOMEONE TO BE SWEET TO YOU?
DO YOU WANT SOMEONE TO THRILL YOU?
WHOM DO YOU PREFER?
A DREAM?
What the hell was that?
VUMP
End

The DEMON PRINCE of MOMOCHI HOUSE

The DEMON PRINCE of MOMOCHI HOUSE

I went to a fireworks show the other day. I rarely went to them when I was little, but now that I'm an adult, I get the urge to go.
I wanted this picture to show my characters reminiscing about vague memories, and I tried to invoke that end-of-summer feeling.
My color illustrations depict various seasons, but I think *Momochi House* is a summer story.
The next volume will take a little bit longer than usual to come out, but I hope you'll continue to read *Momochi House*!



The DEMON PRINCE of MOMOCHI HOUSE

Aya Shouoto
2015

祥音あや
二〇一五

For this cover, my editor suggested that I draw Aoi being held captive to mirror what's happening in the story. But once I drew it, it looked more like Aoi had gotten himself tangled up. Someone please cut him loose.

-Aya Shouoto

Aya Shouoto was born on December 25. Her hobbies are traveling, staying at hotels, sewing and daydreaming. She currently lives in Tokyo and enjoys listening to J-pop anime theme songs while she works.

The Demon Prince of Momochi House

Volume 8
Shojo Beat Edition

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